



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND THE WAR

BY DAVID LAWRENCE

THIS is a day when the life of American industry and the domestic well-being of the nation, dependent largely on foreign markets, are intimately associated with the foreign policies of the Government. American diplomacy, hitherto aimless and placid, has become intensely practical. Its trend is now destined to be influenced in a variety of ways. Indeed, the central thought in the minds of officials and diplomats who are thinking, in a broad sense, of America and the present war is how far the identity of interest of the nations of this hemisphere will strengthen the bonds of Pan-Americanism and increase our trade in Central and South America; to what extent also the interests of this country in the Philippines and the Far East, generally, will require definition, or what adjustments of outstanding difficulties with Japan over the California anti-alien laws, or with Russia over the Jewish passport question, will present themselves in the light of current events.

To be sure, the advantages hitherto gained by the United States in its forbearance and championship of the cause of peace are not likely to divert the Government at any time from a recognition of our own equities in the unusual situation produced by the war. For while there no longer is any doubt of the commercial equity possessed by this nation in the affairs of the world, the American people have not until this moment been conscious of the diplomatic responsibilities acquired for them by the comparatively recent ascendancy of the United States to a position of command among world Powers. Irrespective of which countries shall be the victors in the present struggle, the era of peace, as before, will present a system of checks and balances. Just how and where the United States ultimately will contribute its influence to the making of such an equilibrium has from the first absorbed the attention of the Ambassadors and Ministers accredited here.

Sixteen years ago American foreign policy could have been summarized in a phrase—the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine. Then the Spanish-American War gave us the Philippines and a Far-Eastern question, with policies and interests destined by no means to diminish in importance with the promised grant of independence to the Archipelago. And now the greatest war of world history is molding for us a European policy. Traditionally, we have been opposed to “entangling alliances.” Not even the most biased of the foreign diplomats here believes the United States ever will depart voluntarily from that course. Admittedly, it would be contrary to the spirit of independent America to bind itself in an offensive or defensive alliance with any nation. This would introduce a mutual responsibility over the respective actions of the contracting parties directly at variance with the doctrines of the American Republic as upheld by our statesmen from the very beginning. But Governments are not impersonal; their relations to each other are those of one individual to another. Nations breathe their passions, their likes, and dislikes, through the agency of Governments. The aspirations of one often are in conflict with those of another and just as frequently, too, identity, or, rather, community, of interest breeds strong and lasting friendships.

It is easy to point the goal of American diplomacy—the development of a policy of genuine friendship for all the nations of Europe, expecting from them in return a recognition of the paramountcy of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. But the attainment of this means a more general and explicit acquiescence in our interests by the different nations of Europe than we have witnessed in the past. Some may continue to remain aloof, interpreting in their own way and to their own interest the measure of their assent. With those who are in thorough agreement with us and do not seek to interpose obstacles to the development of our paramount interests it is inevitable that close understandings, often more effective than alliances, will ensue.

Such is the result which many diplomats foresee out of the rising influence of the United States. They do not predicate their beliefs on whether the Triple Entente or the Germanic Alliance will win. In fact, neutral diplomats and many high officials of the United States Government tired early of hearing the iterated boasts that Germany, or England, or France, or Russia would be “crushed.” The neutral cannot conceive that

the limitless resources of the belligerents ever will permit so decisive a result. The pertinent fact, the importance of which is by no means underestimated in Washington, is that for the United States there always will be a Britain, a Germany, a France, a Russia, and an Austria with which to deal. The respective relation of these countries to each other cannot materially change their individual or collective feeling toward us. The tremendous resources of the United States make us more desirable even as a friend, and even as an ally, and less and less welcome as an adversary. A world granary is worth scores of army corps.

Should the mediation of the United States eventually be accepted, obviously its duties would be simply that of an intermediary furnishing the medium of communication through which the parties at interest are brought together to fix their own terms. No one for the moment believes that the United States will have a voice in making those terms, nor is it her desire to speak in that connection. Possibly for reasons best known to the belligerents, Italy, Spain, or Switzerland, or some of the other neutrals of Europe, may furnish the diplomatic machinery for the making of peace, a contingency which could not affect us adversely and might have the peculiar advantage of removing possible causes of embarrassment.

Whether the United States will accomplish the chief object of its diplomacy—the development of friendship for all while entering into hostile combinations toward none—depends, for the present, on the kind of neutrality preserved by the Administration and by the people of this country collectively. Ours, truly, has been a vigorous, unrelenting neutrality, as contrasted with the “friendly” or “beneficent neutrality” so often characteristic of States contiguous to those at war. The best proof of the impartiality of American neutrality is the universal approval given it by neutral nations. Neutral Governments have not hesitated to follow our lead or seek our advice.

Most of the negotiations of the United States in disputes as to commerce and contraband, it so happens, have been with Great Britain because of the naval superiority of that nation. Although controversies over seizures of ships and cargoes will continue indefinitely, a deep-rooted feeling of confidence, based perhaps on the free interplay of public opinion in the two English-speaking countries, prevails among the officials of the American Government, that the relations between the United

States and Great Britain at the end of the war will not be less cordial than at its inception.

As for the subsequent relations, on the other hand, between Germany and the United States, the belief existed for several months in many quarters in Washington, among some of our officials, and shared to an extent by neutral envoys, that, unfortunately, the two nations hereafter would not be as friendly. It was evident that such apprehensions were based to some extent on the fact that a large portion of the American press manifested itself in favor of the cause of the Allies. The prohibition by the American Government of the manufacture of submarines in this country for the Allies, the repeated protests against interference by England with neutral commerce, and the unwillingness of President Wilson to heed the suggestions of British publicists and even prominent Americans to protest against alleged violations of the articles of the Hague Convention may have failed to convince the German people, in these days of interrupted cables and censors, of the sincerity of our neutrality. As time passes they are bound to understand. The most amusing but none the less significant circumstance of the day is that German despatches charge the Administration with being "pro-English," and London despatches not infrequently have accused the same officials of "pro-German sympathies."

In the long run the moot question of neutrality and the idea that our decisions appeared to favor one side or the other will be viewed as a matter of accident rather than intent. They will balance each other—this is the conclusion of far-seeing diplomats who recall similar occurrences in history and discount the passions of the hour. Yet one phase of the situation which may linger long in the minds of German publicists, and perhaps a large part of the people, is the partisan debate which Americans have carried on in newspapers at home and abroad on various aspects of the war. Notwithstanding President Wilson's earnest appeal for neutrality of utterance, a prejudice against Germany's cause in the present war has been manifest in many journals and periodicals which is likely to be construed as an antipathy toward the German people, for whom America always has felt an admiring friendship. It is not necessary to argue here the merits of these prejudices, but merely to realize the fact of their existence. Certain it is that unless American public opinion through its various channels of expression effectually dispels the view, now developing in some parts of Germany, that the people of the United States have all but taken sides

physically in the present conflict, the position of this Government in the future, be it Republican or Democratic, will be rendered constantly embarrassing. Every act of our Government will be judged in the light of these war prejudices, and a feeling of natural distrust will be born which cannot but affect seriously frankness and cordiality in official relations.

Assuming, however, that no overt acts will occur during the present war to cause estrangement between Germany and the United States, there are some diplomats who see in the Far Eastern situation an index of our future relations with Germany. This view has its origin in the belief that the interests of Germany and the United States, as opposed to Japan, will tend more and more to coincide. Bernhardt, in his now-famous book, suggested the same idea.

Opposed to this line of thought, however, is the view of many American officials and diplomats who see no possibility of war with Japan, because they are convinced no momentous question will arise which such a conflict could settle. They contend that the mastery of the Pacific need be decided no more than has been the mastery of the Atlantic. Our commercial relations with Japan are profitable and constantly expanding. The abstract issue, moreover, of racial superiority as between the Caucasian and the yellow races does not require settlement by the United States any more than by the other nations of the world.

British diplomacy, which availed itself of the intimacy of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to restrain the Tokio Government from precipitating a crisis in the last California dispute undoubtedly will continue to exhibit that alliance to us as a similar bulwark for the future. Such a course would seem to be dictated not only by the desire for the preservation of a strong friendship between the United States and Great Britain, but by an appreciation, on the part of England, that racial prejudices, and an inclination to exclude the Japanese, is no less malignant in Australia and Canada than in California. A definite break between Japan and the United States assuredly would test to the extreme the strength of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. But the entry of Japan into the present war, involving big expenditures to an already-overburdened treasury, as well as the new opportunity for Japanese commercial expansion now sought by her in China, are counted upon by British diplomats to divert Japanese attention from this continent and secure, for many years, at least, peaceful relations with this country.

An interesting suggestion has been advanced in this connec-

tion by some American observers of Far Eastern affairs. They would bring about the acquiescence of the United States in the retention by Japan of the Bay of Kiao-chou for the remaining years of the lease previously held by Germany. Before hostilities were declared in the period during which Japan's ultimatum to Germany was being considered in Washington, the United States formally recorded itself in a note to Japan as expecting "to be consulted" in all matters affecting the territorial integrity of China and in such efforts as Japan might desire to institute to quell revolutionary outbreaks in China proper. Japan, on her part, promised eventually to restore Kiao-chou to China. Count Okuma, the Japanese Premier, some months ago announced that these promises had been nullified because Germany did not comply with the terms of the ultimatum, necessitating a long siege of Tsing Tao and many sacrifices.

In the mean time those who would urge the United States to acquiesce in the retention of Kiao-chou by Japan argue that for us the substitution of Japan for Germany in the leased territory can make no diplomatic or commercial difference. In return the suggestion is offered that the United States might conceivably obtain from Japan a favorable understanding or adjustment of all outstanding difficulties. Japan recently began separate negotiations with China relative to foreign commercial concessions, the exact effect of which on the Hay policy of the "open door" and equality of opportunity is not clear at this writing, and which may affect the attitude of the United States when the moment arrives for discussing the restoration of Kiao-chou to China.

In the light of present events with the manifold possibilities which the future holds in store it is pertinent to remember that the status of our foreign relations at the outbreak of the war will have a most important bearing on the course which European nations will be inclined to pursue when they are able to give closer attention to their interests in this hemisphere. We asked for a free hand in Mexico and obtained it. We adopted the principle that the States of the Americas should not be embarrassed by foreign concessionaires in working out their own destinies. During the progress of the European war we have had added to the manifestations which Great Britain and France previously had given us, of their acquiescence in the Monroe Doctrine, a practical recognition by Germany of her respect for the same. Of all the varying effects, indeed, which

the present war will have on the world's diplomacy, the most certain and calculable result is the open recognition by virtually the entire world of the paramount interests of the United States in this half of the globe. The Monroe Doctrine has never been defined; American diplomats consider its vagueness a virtue, though the numerous corollaries drawn from it have not been without embarrassments. The Powers of Europe in the past have not been slow to burden us with its implied responsibilities, while reluctantly begrudging us its manifest privileges. Mexico at the close of the European war may furnish a supreme test of our responsibilities.

Although President Wilson in his references to the United States as "the nearest neighbor of Mexico" has never mentioned the Monroe Doctrine, it has been the purpose of his Administration to dispel the notion existing in many parts of Central and South America that the Doctrine comprehended the exercise of police power by the United States to the impairment of national sovereignties.

Several Ambassadors and Ministers from the countries to the south of us have told the writer recently that the relations between the United States and the nations in this hemisphere were never more cordial or friendly. No doubt this result has been reached because of the benevolent friendship which, on the whole, the various Administrations at Washington have exhibited toward weaker States. These grow more impressive, indeed, in contrast to the historic examples of domination by European Powers over smaller Governments. Latin America at last is convinced that the days of territorial aggression, once stimulated by the greed for slave States, have passed away and that the American people, essentially peaceful and self-sufficient amid their boundless resources and intensive opportunities, can well afford to continue their altruistic position. Our withdrawal from Cuba, and the declared intention of this Government to grant independence some day to the Philippines, demonstrates clearly to the world that the United States is not quietly seeking territory while professing otherwise. It is but natural, therefore, that the vitality given Pan-Americanism by the spontaneous efforts of the Central and South American nations themselves should have drawn them intimately to us in discussing the rights of neutrals in the European war. Almost within a year the nations of this hemisphere have recognized that in a closer understanding with the United States lies their greatest security.

Turning to our relations with the individual countries of Europe, we find special problems confronting us in both Turkey and Russia. Abrogation by the Ottoman Government of the capitulations during the stress of the war's confusion will not erase the claim of the Powers for extra-territorial rights and privileges in a country where religious tolerance is so doubtful. Identity of interest, no doubt, will bring all the Christian nations together in an effort to compose the situation there. Should German influence eventually be preponderant in Turkey, a settlement is no less likely than if British or Russian domination ensues. Regardless of the possibility that the United States may have to assert itself in the Levant before the present war ends, certainly we shall insist on receiving the same privileges granted to other foreigners in whatever understanding the European nations ultimately may reach with Turkey.

With respect to Russia, the circumstances which caused us to abrogate our commercial treaty—discrimination against the passports of American citizens who happened to be of the Jewish faith—seem certain to be altered in the not far-distant future. The promises which Russia already has made for the political and religious freedom of the Jew have divided what otherwise might have been a solid antipathy to the cause of the Allies by the Jews of America. Domestic reform in Russia with respect to the Jew no doubt would be received with enthusiastic approval by American Jews—the influential force behind the abrogation of our last treaty. If the promises are fulfilled, Russia certainly would have no plausible reason for discriminating against foreign Jews, especially Americans.

There is at present more than an expectancy in both Washington and Petrograd that a new commercial treaty overcoming the previous causes of objection will soon be negotiated. Both countries are anxious to provide the single stimulus needed for the making of an important agreement of reciprocal value. Numerous opportunities already have appeared in the development of European Russia and the Near and Far East where Russian influence has inclined toward American enterprise.

As for the other countries of Europe, France, Austria, Italy, Spain, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries are all our sincere friends. Our influence, wherever exerted, has been honorable and inspired by unquestioned motives. The universal readiness of practically all the nations of the world to sign treaties with us, agreeing to submit to a joint commission of investigation all disputes which may arise, is significant of their

faith in our uprightness. We have ratified conventions of this kind with nearly all the nations of the globe except Germany, Japan, and Turkey, and our diplomacy, for the next two years at least, will endeavor to add them to the list. Although a panacea for the passion that produces armed conflict may never be found, it is evident that if nations are sincerely desirous of avoiding war they can find in such treaties a bulwark of real security.

In these efforts to establish on a solid basis of friendship the relations of the United States with the other peoples of the globe may be seen the cause to which our Government and the nation is now dedicated. We may have no direct interest in the turbulence of the Balkans, but we have an equity in the peace of the world. In retrospect, the thought often suggests itself as to whether the present war would have been fought if the mediation of a single outside Power in whom all Europe could have placed its trust had been projected during those diplomatic conversations which preceded the actual outbreak of hostilities. Mutual distrust hastened the catastrophe.

The present war undeniably has won for the United States a universal respect abroad, notwithstanding the animadversions of interested propagandists. The world looks to us for the highest ideals of government and international amity. With such an enviable reputation the influence of the United States after the close of the war cannot but resolve itself into a balancing-force, ever working for the advancement of civilization and the cause of humanity—a force backed by such a wealth of public opinion as might well stay the hand of over-zealous nations or lend assistance to peoples struggling for national entity.

DAVID LAWRENCE.